GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SPACE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1629
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2000
LIFTING THE BAN ON THE SALE OF AMERICAN SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHS
Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY

Will the Minister of SPACE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have lifted the ban on the sale of high definition American Satellite photographs whose distribution had earlier been prohibited in the country on national security considerations;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) the satellite called Ikonos can take pictures of objects as small as a bicycle tyre from a height of 700 kilometres and the Defence Ministry had objected to its distribution fearing they might compromise national security by revealing secret defence installations;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the extent to which National security could be secured by lifting the ban?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SPACE (SMT. VASUNDHARA RAJE):

(a)&(b) No, Sir.

(c),(d) & (e) IKONOS has a nominal resolution of 1m. Such an imaging resolution would make detection of buildings and other features easy. This aspect and its impact on national security will be taken into consideration while finalising the Remote Sensing Data Policy.